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We had omens from the acts of animals, which I cannot here discuss. I will simply mention that when the woodchucks hibernated early, and the muskrats built their houses unusually high, a long, cold winter, with floods in the spring, was promised. Many litters of young foxes in the spring promised a good beech-nut season, with abundance of passenger pigeons and ruffed grouse in the autumn. The eastern migration of the gray squirrel indicated drought and poor crops in the West.

This migration — one of the curiosities in the movements of animals — is too complicated to be discussed here. The advent of the crossbills and the pine grosbeak in the autumn was also the promise of a hard winter.

VARIOUS NOTICES.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.—In the death of the most distinguished of American men of letters, the American Folk-Lore Society loses an interested member. A few weeks before the conclusion of his painful illness, Mr. Lowell placed in the hands of the editor of this Journal certain small contributions, the gleanings of former journeys in New England. In these last months, suffering endured with courage had left its mark on his features, and given a singularly noble as well as touching expression to the face. At a time when the entire press of America is engaged in recording his history and honoring his name, it does not seem necessary to dwell on the life or memory of the illustrious poet; but it will not be out of place to give expression to the grief of the neighbors and townsmen of Mr. Lowell, who during his long absence had looked forward to the time in which he might once more be settled in his old home. In this expectation they have been disappointed; they feel that something has been taken away which can never be replaced. No man, therefore, could be more sincerely mourned. To be so loved and so honored, alike by distant admirers and by near neighbors, is surely as great success as can fall to the lot of any man.

W. W. N.

INTERNATIONAL FOLK-LORE CONGRESS.—The following is the programme laid out for the proceedings of this Congress, which is to meet in the Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, London, October 1 to 7, 1891:—

Thursday, Oct. 1, *Afternoon*.—Opening of the Congress; Address of the President, Mr. Andrew Lang. Appointment of an International Folk-Lore Council.

Evening.—Reception by the President.

Friday, Oct. 2, *Morning*.—Meeting of the Folk-Tale Section; Address of the Chairman, Mr. E. Sidney Hartland, F. S. A., and Papers.

Afternoon.—Papers on Subjects relating to this Section.

Evening.—Reception at the British Museum.

Saturday, Oct. 3, *Morning*. — Further Papers.

Afternoon. — Visit to Oxford; Luncheon at Merton College; Reception at the Ashmolean Museum.

Evening. — Reception at the Misses Hawkins Dempster, 24 Portman Square.

Monday, Oct. 5, *Morning*. — Meeting of the Mythological Section; Address of the Chairman, Professor John Rhys, M. A., and Papers.

Afternoon. — Papers on Subjects relating to this Section.

Evening. — *Conversazione*, with representation of English Mumming Play, Children's Games, Sword Dance, Savage Music, and Folk Songs.

Tuesday, Oct. 6, *Morning*. — Meeting of the Institutions Section; Address of the Chairman, Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., and Papers.

Afternoon. — Papers on Subjects relating to this Section.

Evening. — Congress Dinner.

Wednesday, Oct. 7, *Morning*. — Reports of Committees and Business Meeting, concluding the Congress.

N. B. — Tickets of Membership of the Congress (price 10s, 6*d.*) entitle the owners to participate in the whole of the above, but railway fare to Oxford, October 3*d.*, and the Congress Dinner, October 6*th* (5*s.* per head, exclusive of wine), will be extras.

The Congress promises to be most agreeable, in the opportunities it will offer for social intercourse, as well as for discussion. It is to be regretted that the date of meeting will render it difficult for many Americans to be present who would gladly have taken part if the time set were consistent with the engagements of college professors and others interested.

FOLK-TALE SECTION OF THE CONGRESS. — According to the schedule, it will appear that the greatest part of the time of the Congress is to be given to an examination of folk-tales. The discussion thus insured will be awaited with no small interest.

How energetic has recently been the collecting of folk-tales, is shown by the valuable paper of Mr. E. Sidney Hartland, in "Folk-Lore," March, 1891, in which the writer reviews Folk-tale Research for the year. He cites twenty-six publications. Mr. Hartland's own contribution to the study, "The Science of Fairy Tales," is noticed among reviews of books in this number.

The "Opening Address to the Folk-Lore Society for the Session 1890-91," by Mr. G. L. Gomme, in the same issue of "Folk-Lore," includes some notice of general questions likely to be debated at the Congress. The writer considers folk-tradition to be represented by a triangle, the base of which is as wide as primitive knowledge, but of which the apex, extending to modern times, has narrowed to a point. Folk-lore contains the survivals of the oldest and rudest culture of man. He appears to incline to the theory that the ideas of primitive man are nearly the same the world over, and that there is little room for the borrowing theory. In the course of the article, a number of most interesting examples of the permanence, in England, of pre-Christian usages are cited. These oldest relics, he contends, must in any case be the starting-point of explanations as to origins.